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## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to the Report of Head of Mission to Croatia, Ambassador Jorge Fuentes Monzonís-Vilallonga**

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Julie Finley  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
July 19, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States warmly welcomes the Head of the OSCE Mission in Croatia, Ambassador Fuentes, to the Permanent Council.

As we said last week to Prime Minister Sanader, Croatia is an OSCE success story. This is at least in part due to the excellent cooperative relationship between the OSCE Mission and the host government. Croatia has made good use of the assistance provided by the OSCE Mission, and several areas of the Mission mandate were completed and closed last year.

Nonetheless, as Prime Minister Sanader pointed out, work remains to be done in the areas of refugee returns and war crimes trial monitoring, including a focus on measures for the protection of witnesses in war crimes trials.

The Mission and the Government of Croatia have agreed on specific goals that should be achieved by the end of this year. If these goals are met, further engagement of the OSCE Mission in its current form beyond 2007 will not be necessary.

We very much appreciate the excellent background reports that the Mission has produced on priority issues, such as the recent report on the "Implementation of Housing Care Programs for Former OTR Holders". Such reports will guide us as we move towards closing the Mission at the end of 2007.

We look forward to discussing a possible follow-on structure, if needed, as we move forward toward a decision on this matter at the Madrid Ministerial.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.